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ALASKA PEOPLE

OCTOBER 1990

VOLUME XI

NUMBER X



BLM's Sue Steinacher...
Mushing Ambassador
to Russia pg. 6-7

The Hanaayee Corner

*"There's the land. (Have you seen it?)
It's the cussedest land that I know.
From the big, dizzy mountains that screen it, to the deep, death-like valleys below.
Some say God was tired when he made it
Some say it's a fine land to shun
Maybe, but there's some as would trade it for no land on earth,
And, I'm one"*

*Robert Service
Spell of the Yukon*

During my first fifty days as district manager for Kobuk District, this wisdom of Robert Service has often run through my mind as I have traveled about the district, talked with experienced and knowledgeable members of my staff, and met with local leaders and members of interest groups.

The Kobuk District has tremendous potential for multiple use management. It's 32 million-plus acres of BLM administered lands, including approximately 16 million acres selected by Native corporations and the State of Alaska, boast highly important fisheries, wildlife, minerals, recreation, watershed, soils, and cultural resource values—mostly untouched.

It stretches from the Dalton Highway on the east to the Bering and Chukchi Seas on the west. From north to south, it covers the vast Interior of Alaska between the foothills of the Brooks and Alaska Ranges.

Fisheries values in the Kobuk District are phenomenal with 70 percent of the salmon caught on the Seward Peninsula/Norton Sound coming from rivers on BLM administered lands.

Fisheries biologists **Joe Webb** and **Carl Kretsinger** are inventorying and enhancing habitat on the Seward Peninsula. Webb helped

develop a tri-party MOU with ADF&G, Nome School District and BLM establishing a fish hatchery which will provide a learning laboratory for Nome High School Students.

Wildlife biologist **Scott Robinson**, assisted by co-op student **Randi Anderson** and others, has monitored radio-collared caribou in reindeer conflict areas and studied moose habitat. Robinson, in cooperation with ADF&G and NPS, also studied grizzly bear habitat on the Seward Peninsula. Waterfowl inventories have been conducted the past two years in both coastal and interior areas of the District.

Kobuk District manages the only reindeer grazing program in BLM with 14 permits for 18,000 animals. **Larry Knapman** is developing a five-year strategic plan for reindeer grazing on the Seward Peninsula, as well as allotment management plans for the herders. He is also implementing an ACEC management plan for the Tozitna River.

When not assisting Larry Knapman with reindeer matters, **Larry Field** administers Kobuk's recreation program, which includes 20 Special Recreation Permits for guides and outfitters who operate in many locations within the district. Field will also initiate a recreation inventory and monitoring plan for the proposed wild and scenic Squirrel River and conduct recreation inventory in the Kigiluk Mountains.

Archaeologist **Howard Smith** recently completed a survey of the Miocene and Seward (mining) ditches near Nome. He will initiate an inventory of cultural resources in the Bendeleben Mountains in 1991.

Steve Lundeen, with help from both Norm Messenger and Mary Leykom (Nome and Kotzebue Field Offices) has actively monitored more than 50 mining operators.

The minerals team of **Steve Storo** and **Jim Deininger** continue to complete mineral patent exams. Kobuk currently has about half of the state's patent exams scheduled over the next five years.



*Helen Hankins,
Kobuk District Manager*

Boyce Bush, **Betsy Bonnell** and **Dave Mobraten** comprise the realty staff and are active in processing FLPMA realty actions, investigating possible occupancy trespass, issuing hot springs leases, and working with settlers in the Minchumina area to determine if they've met their settlement requirements.

Nome and Kotzebue Field Offices are each staffed with one individual. **Norm Messenger** and **Mary Leykom** work as liaisons for Kobuk with local leaders and interest groups and are undertaking resource management projects in their respective locations.

Kobuk District is the finest land on earth with incredibly valuable natural and cultural resources, and there are many opportunities for multiple resource management. I look forward to working with **Herb Brownell** and **Bob Barnes**, assistant district managers for Renewable Resources and for Land and Minerals, respectively, and their staffs to meet the challenges of managing these lands for people in the 38 villages located within the district and for the people of Alaska and the nation.

Pronounced ha nie' yee, hanaayee is Koyukon Athabascan for "reporter" or "one who talks."

Remember When the Government Ran U.S. Townsites for Settlers? Alaska Is Finishing Up The Last Of Them.

by Rob McWhorter

Townsite management by the United States is down to a 1992 goal for completing work on the 34 townsites remaining in Alaska.

From the early days of Alaska, individual settlers living in a community could petition the federal government to establish a townsite. Under the auspices of the General Land Office (along with the Grazing Service the predecessor of the modern BLM), a townsite would be laid out, surveyed, and a U.S. patent granted to the Townsite trustee. The trustee would then take applications for deeds from the individual residents, and assuming the settlers met the requirements of the law, deeds to each person's property would be issued by the trustee, with any leftover lots deeded to the incorporated townsite. The trustee would then officially close the government files on that townsite.

Around the turn of the century in Alaska, with the tremendous difficulties of travel and the immense distances involved, the trustees were often appointed from among the townsite's residents. These people were prominent in the community and believed to be impartial. As time went on, however, it became apparent that the public interest was better served by vesting this trusteeship in a federal employee who could be truly impartial.

According to the current Acting Trustee, BLM's Allan Breitzman, "The complexities that can arise in administering Townships in Alaska are enough to puzzle Mr. Rubic. However, recent court decisions have clarified some things for us and we now see a likely end to the program by the end of 1992."

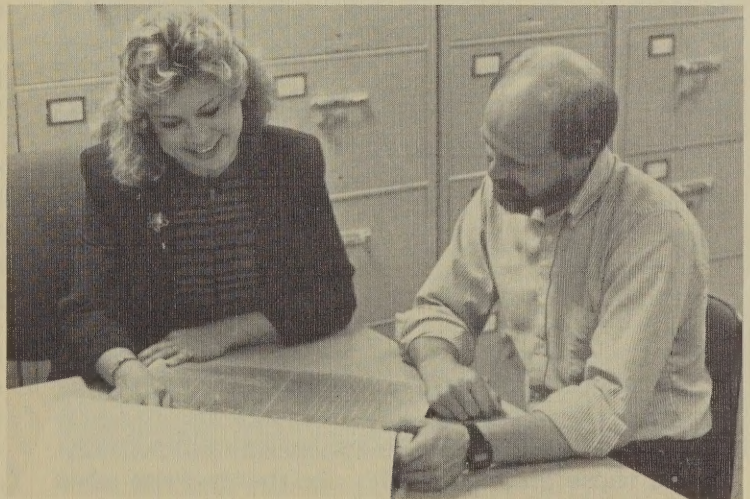
Land Law Assistant Shirley Spurlock manages the historic and active Townsite files. Here one can find U.S. Patents to the Townsite Trustee, detailed records of surveys completed, and account books of the financial management of the townsite properties.

Many of these documents are of historical interest and Spurlock often finds names of original settlers reflected in modern Alaska place names. When the townsite function is completed in 1992, these files will be computerized and accessible in BLM's public room. The tract book and surveys are sent to the townsites.

The Townsite process started in 1891 in Alaska and will finish 101 years later. In that time, around 150 townsites were established, patented and deeds issued conveying the lands to many thousands of individual settlers. Over 300 detailed sub-divisional surveys were made to allow the land to be transferred from the government to the people. In Anchorage alone, a total of 12 U.S. subdivision surveys were run as the townsite grew.

Another piece of Americana is slipping toward the sunset as Alaska's U.S. Townsite Trustee duties come to an end...

The Townsite process, started in 1891 in Alaska, will finish 101 years later.



Land Law Assistant Shirley Spurlock and acting Townsite Trustee Al Breitzman consult a historical index

IRM- On Call 24 Hours a Day



IRM's on-calls, (left to right) Bob James, Gary Paddock, Joe Essert, Ross Bordwell, Dwight Sandlin. (not pictured Bonnie Willer, Jim Braham)

by Terry Brokovich

While most of us are at home with our families resting after a hard day's work, there's a group of BLMers on call, 24 hours a day, so that the computer systems we rely on are instantly available when we arrive for work each morning.

Who are these BLMers? The Division of IRM's Branch of Computer Operations and the Telecommunications Section.

BLM Alaska Data Center is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to perform after hours batch jobs, data backups, and provide operational capabilities to those among us who use the systems after hours.

The Center is staffed by contract staff operators on all shifts (except for federal holidays). They provide operational capabilities to the users, but when something goes wrong, the Operations and Telecommunications staff members begin receiving calls on their beepers to rectify the problem. Problems that typically arise are usually associated with the computer hardware and/or operating systems. Sometimes these key ingredients to the system just flake out.

Because of efforts by these staff members, the computer systems are available 99 percent of the time. This compares to the national average of 95 percent availability.

This optimum 'up-time' is achieved not only by the personnel assigned to keep systems up, but by other computers that have been installed to make certain that everything runs smoothly. One of these devices is a UPS (Interruptible Power Supply), which provides power to the Data Center even when power in the building is out.

The UPS has batteries that provide electrical power when current to the Data Center is cut off. The batteries can provide power to the entire Data Center for 15 minutes allowing the building's emergency generator the 1 1/2 minutes necessary to begin providing power to the Center.

Another device recently installed in the Data Center is a 'sensa-phone' which constantly monitors the environment within the Data Center. If the temperature or humidity in the Data Center rises above threshold limits, the 'sensa-phone' is programmed to call staff members and alert them about the environment problem. Staff members have mentioned that being awakened at 3:00 a.m. by a synthetic voice on the other end of the telephone is like hearing the sound of fingernails being scraped across a blackboard. But the bottom line is that with these devices the Data Center can maintain an extremely high level of availability to our users.

IRM's Computer Operations Branch and Telecommunications Section keep your computers up and running 24-hours a day.

Biologists Inventory 5.8 Million Acres of Moose Habitat

by Sue Mitchell

Almost 541,000 acres of BLM land in the Kobuk District provide habitat for high densities of moose, and 2.3 million acres support medium densities of moose. This is the preliminary result of a study that has been on-going since late 1985.

Biologist Scott Robinson has three objectives for this study:

1) to determine the distribution and relative densities of moose on 11 million acres of public land in the Kobuk District;

2) to determine moose preference for habitat types; and

3) to identify six areas for habitat enhancement using prescribed fire.

Determining the total population of moose on public land is not a goal, but the data will help other agencies such as the Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimate total moose populations.

In five years, Robinson has flown over 5.8 million acres of BLM-managed land and 3.1 million acres of state and Native-selected land looking for moose. First, he separated the vast area into approximately 12-square-mile sample units. Then he and two other researchers flew over the area in a Cessna 185 airplane and recorded the moose they saw.

Based on the flyover count, Robinson categorized each unit as having a low, medium or high density moose population. "This stratification is a quick and easy method for determining relative moose densities," Robinson said. "You probably see only about 25 percent of all moose that are actually there." The number of moose actually sighted ranged from an average 2.6 per square mile in one high-density area to .02 per square mile in a low density area.

In addition to determining where the highest densities of moose occur, Robinson is comparing fire history of the area to moose densities.

The number of acres burned on average in Alaska has been declining for the last five decades. Consequently, vegetation communities are growing older. The vegetation growing in areas that have not burned for 25 years or more is less valuable as forage for moose, although it does provide cover. Robinson hopes to get the information into a GIS computer system for analysis.



(photo by Mike Mathers)

One of Robinson's objectives is to identify areas that would benefit from prescribed burning. These areas should have a medium density moose population already in place, vegetation older than 25 years, fuels that will burn easily and natural barriers to help contain the fire.

The project is about half completed. If funding is available, Robinson hopes to finish the study by FY 1994. Not only is knowledge of moose distribution and relative densities of moose crucial to proper land management, but it also provides important information for managing a major subsistence resource on the public lands.

BLM's Steinacher, Mushing Ambassador



Sue Steinacher and Tucker, her favorite lead dog, frolic in the autumn leaves in Fairbanks.

by Sharon Durgan Wilson

BLM's Sue Steinacher is rapidly becoming known as Alaska's mushing ambassador to Russia. She's been to Russia four times in a year and a half.

An avid recreational musher, Steinacher is the new interpretive specialist for the Steese/White Mountains District. She first worked for BLM as a seasonal recreational technician in 1986/87. Prior to BLM, she worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, monitoring the walrus harvest on Little Diomed Island.

"I fell in love with the people of Little Diomed, and returned to work in the Nome area for the Kawerak Native Corporation from 1988 until last August," says Steinacher. Her sense of adventure, love of the western coast of Alaska and its people drew her into the most unusual of Russian-American relations.

"The neat thing is that it all just happened as a result of circumstances. I was never a part of any official delegation—it was truly a person-to-person exchange.

"Friends at Little Diomed asked me to help with passport and visa paperwork for the Native crew members of a skin boat crew that was going to escort a kayak expedition to Russia."

It was the first opportunity for Alaska Natives to visit their Russian friends and relatives in at least 40 years. Like dominos, one event led to another, and in July 1989, Steinacher found herself in the motorized skin boat as the expedition's photographer/artist.

In good weather and calm seas, the trip takes eight hours, "but the straits are notorious for strong, unpredictable currents and lots of bad weather," Steinacher said.

"Halfway to Little Diomed dense fog, constant wind and high seas set in. We were blown off course, and

after 16 hours we pulled nine kayakers suffering from exhaustion and hypothermia out of their kayaks and into the skin boat.

"Five people in three kayaks insisted on continuing on their own. We were afraid we would never see them again." Soaked to the skin and terrified, the 19 people in the 32-foot skin boat finally reached calmer waters in the leeward side of Big Diomed, the Russian island that is now a military base.

"We landed without permission, against the Eskimo captain's better judgement, and rested a couple of hours.

"The military visited us. I'm sure they were trying to figure out what kind of circus had landed. We had Eskimos in traditional dress, flamboyantly dressed kayakers, a paraplegic kayaker from California and his wheel chair, several women, an English crew was talking with strong British accents, and a camera crew from California was filming the whole scene," Steinacher said.

Understandably nervous, the captain insisted they push off after their rest. They crossed the two and a half miles to Little Diomed, getting thoroughly soaked to the skin again.

After a week of waiting for good weather, expedition members, including Steinacher and eight Eskimos from Little Diomed, piled into two skin boats and continued the voyage in calmer waters, reaching Uelen in four hours. They spent eight days visiting the local people, and met one woman who spoke excellent English.

When Steinacher returned to Nome, she agreed to host Russian Afanassi Makovnev from the Soviet expedition for a 5-week visit. She introduced him to the developers of the Yukon Quest sled dog race, and they flew him to Fairbanks to interest him in publicizing the thousand-mile race in the USSR.

Steinacher flew back to Russia with Makovnev, touring reindeer herder camps in the tundra and traveling by skin boat to several Eskimo/Chukchi villages.

This friendship led Steinacher to fly to Minnesota later that winter as a volunteer handler for the Russian teams in the internationally known Beargrease sled dog race.

She was then included in an invitation to join an international dog sled trip last spring. Steinacher arrived at the airport near Provideniya, a seaport town larger than Nome, with her sled dogs in March.

After two nights in Provideniya, the Soviet and American mushers headed out for a 10-day trek, staying in villages and trapping cabins along the way. "At each village, native dog sled teams would join us and travel with us to the next village.

The trip ended in Uelen, the farthest east village in

o Russia

Although she speaks little Russian, the names of Russian provinces, cities, towns and villages roll liltily from her tongue as she reminisces about her travels.



Sue Steinacher poses with a group of marine mammal hunters (walrus, whales and seals) in the Siberian Yupik (Eskimo) / Chukchi village of Sireniki, south of Provideniya. The village is renowned for its walrus-skin boats called bidarras by the Russians and umiaqs by the American Eskimos (photo by Afanassi Makovnev)

the USSR and the closest to the Alaskan mainland.

The villagers put on a feast and Eskimo dance for the mushers. About 200 people were on hand to say goodbye as they left. Steinacher's plane held two of the mushers and three teams of dogs and their sleds. As the airplane lifted off, it wobbled and crashed to the runway. The Russian authorities later determined that the plane had been loaded too heavy in the tail section.

"One Soviet musher died in the crash, as well as two of my dogs," Steinacher said. Another of my dogs, Vixen, was badly hurt, and fuel was gushing over her from a severed fuel line. I grabbed her and pitched her out of the plane. What a horrible end to such a wonderful trip. But I can't say enough good things about the way the villagers cared for us. We were very lucky to be alive."

After spending the night in the Children's Hospital in Uelen, Steinacher was put on a helicopter back to

Provideniya. Covered with bruises and with four broken ribs, "I felt as if I was deserting my two missing dogs, but the Russians insisted I had to leave immediately." She begged the people of Uelen to look for her dogs.

Vixen was later found near the cultural center in Provideniya, 200 miles north of Uelen. She had retraced the 350-mile route from the crash site back to the starting point of the expedition. Vixen was flown back to Steinacher in Nome. One month later, Vixen produced a litter of seven puppies, a living product of Glastnost. The second dog has never been found, but there are occasional reports of sightings in Russia.

"In all my travels, I have found that although the Russian people are different in many ways, they are warm, generous and friendly. I hope our two countries can continue this exchange and enjoy more of this one-world feeling.

Docket Moves 35,000 Casefiles



The Docket Staff (left to right) Shirley Keisor, Mary Sheckells, Norma Andrews, Gloria Metzner, Steve Grimes, Ramon Garcia's, Gayle Erickson, Betty Adams. (not pictured: Joanie Marie Naef).

by Betty Adams

Instead of counting sheep to go to sleep at night, the folks in ASO's Docket Section probably count flying casefiles!

Docket, in the Division of Support Services, stores, tracks and maintains approximately 140,000 casefiles on lands throughout Alaska. In FY90 alone, more than 35,000 casefiles were processed in and out of Docket.

Docket's services are used by all BLM Alaska, the public, Regional Solicitor's office and other state and federal agencies.

A casefile is an application filed under the BLM public land laws and contains all pertinent information related to its processing and the official Bureau record.

Each casefile is assigned a sequential number in bar code format, preceded by an AA for Anchorage, FF for Fairbanks etc. depending on its location. The

serial number is used to keep track of the location of the file via a computerized Wang case tracking system. As requests for files come in, the system can locate a specific file anywhere within the State of Alaska or Federal Records Center.

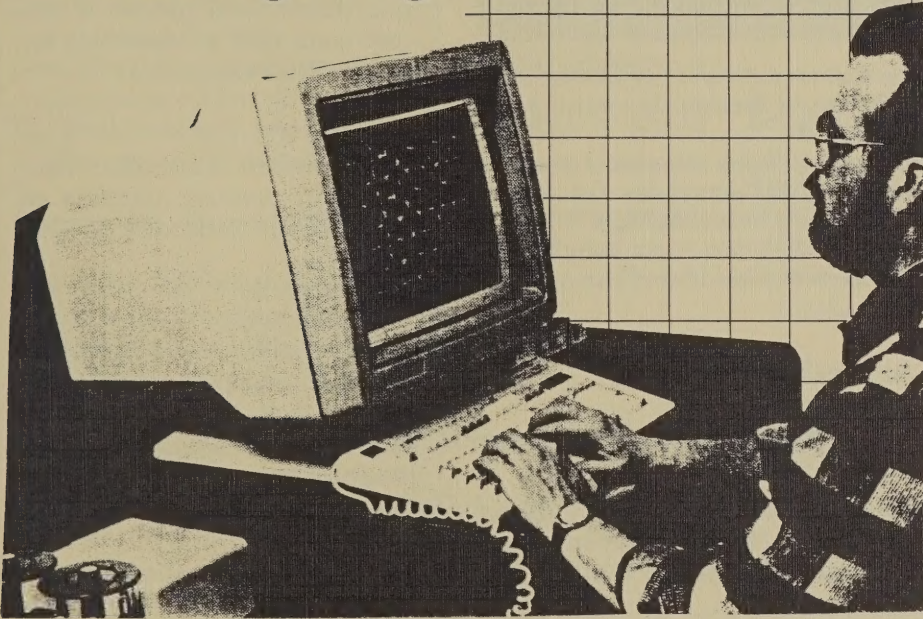
Although providing service to casefile users is important, from a legal point of view, the primary mission of Docket is the maintenance of the serialized casefile control system in BLM-Alaska. Keeping track of these valuable files is extremely important. They may be the only written historical record of land uses for a specific area. Cooperation among users and between Docket and all offices is an absolute necessity in maintaining effective casefile control.

Whether its completing complicated land conveyance documentation or checking the ownership history on a piece of BLM land, the folks in Docket and their 140,000 casefiles make the answers just a little easier to find.



On September 20, Anchorage District Manager Dick Vernimen signed a reciprocal right-of-way agreement between Gateway subdivision in Eagle River and the BLM. The agreement, which is the first of its kind signed in Alaska, gives private landowners in the subdivision legal access across BLM land and gives BLM an administrative non-exclusive right-of-way across their land.

First GCDB Order Accepted... One Thousand Townships Expected Completed by Thanksgiving



This graphic was generated through automation, combining GCDB with bearings and distances from cadastral survey plats.

BLM-Alaska has accepted the first delivery order of final products of a Geographic Coordinate Data Base (GCDB) contract. The contractor, Infotech Development Inc., is collecting geographic positions and survey attributes for virtually all the surveyed townships in Alaska.

The first deliver order, called delivery order 0, was made up of 20 townships and a period of training for the contractor. It is the first of approximately 10 delivery orders to extend over the next 2 1/2 years. Delivery orders 1-3 are in progress. Delivery order 1 consists of 80 townships and delivery orders 2A,

2B, and 3A are 300 townships each.

"One thousand townships of survey information are expected to be completed by around Thanksgiving," says Alaska GCDB Project Manager John Toms. "We are meeting our original projections and are right on schedule."

Two GCDB contracts were let nationally, one for the Lower 48, minus Oregon BLM, who is doing its GCDB work in-house, and a separate contract for Alaska. The contractor for Alaska BLM is collecting geographic coordinate positions and certain survey attributes which will allow the GCDB data to

connect to the Alaska Automated Lands and Minerals Records System (AALMRS) data.

While the contractors are collecting survey data, some employees in Alaska's Title and Land Status are collecting similar geographic coordinate information for unsurveyed land applications, withdrawals, etc. The positions of these unsurveyed land applications are being digitized from current Master Title Plats and their actual locations will be updated as they become surveyed. Eventually the surveyed and unsurveyed data will be merged together to form a computerized master title plat data base.

This initial survey data collection phase done under the current contract is intended to capture the majority of BLM Alaska's current survey records. Later phases of data collection will include the collection of survey data from other agencies, the State of Alaska, and from the private sector.

A portion of the current data collection effort, which is being done by BLM employees, includes gathering information for the unsurveyed townships within the state. The automated geographic coordinates which were used in making the Bureau's protraction diagrams for these unsurveyed areas is being verified and updated, as well as updating the hydrography depicted on them in areas where the Bureau has more current information. The positions of unsurveyed land applications, etc. are also being collected in these unsurveyed townships.

BLM Alaska's completed GCDB will include the most current and accurate geographic positions of all surveyed and unsurveyed townships within the state, certain attributes associated with the actual survey data, and geographic positions for the unsurveyed applications, withdrawals, etc.

Alaska's GCDB data collection effort is a part BLM's overall objective to create a national Land Information System (LIS).

Give to CFC!



ASO BLMer Joanie Marie Naef and Johnny Collinsworth and his Sophisticated Country Band helped kick off this year's Combined Federal Campaign in the Anchorage Federal Building atrium on September 13.

The music and clowns handing out popcorn and balloons attracted a crowd as civilian vice chair John Quinley and Elmendorf Base Commander Col. Rastus Massey encouraged everyone to give liberally to this year's campaign.

A small sacrifice on your part could mean a large difference in someone's life! A keyworker will be contacting you some time between October 15 and November 15.

Workwise or Otherwise

Congratulations to Conveyance's **Shirley Spurlock** for taking a ribbon at the 1990 Alaska State Fair with her "Surely Hearty Blueberry Pie!" Shirley also won third place in the Crisco All American Pie Contest and a check for \$50.

Dick Bouts, Outdoor Recreation Planner for Steese/White Mountains District, recently received a letter of commendation from BLM Director Cy Jamison for his work at the 1989 Boy Scouts of America Jamboree. "I commend you on your service and dedication to these young people...you are a shining example of BLM's professional workforce and I salute you for your labor on and off the job," wrote Jamison.

Don't miss the Tundra Tykes Child Care Center dedication Thursday, October 25. Plans include a 3:00 PM ceremony at the Sheraton followed by an open-house from 4-6:00 PM at the center.

The Tundra Tykes Child Care Center enrolled 17 children (six from BLM) during the first two weeks of registration. Registration continues through the end of the October for federal employees. Registration opens to the public November 5.

ASO Activity Committee Calendar for 1990

October 1 - November 2

Bring your best recipes to the mailroom for a statewide BLM cookbook due out before Christmas. 75% of proceeds will go to charity, 25% to ASO's employee fund.

Also...be sure to enter the cookbook cover design contest. The winner will receive a free cookbook and a certificate for dinner (\$50 value).

October 31

Halloween costume and pumpkin carving contests in ASO's Yukon Room at 2:30 p.m.

November 21

Thanksgiving Turkey Raffle and Pie Social in ASO's Denali Room at 2:30 p.m. Tickets will be on sale November 1-20. Proceeds will be split 50/50 between charity and the employee fund.

November 27-December 6

Christmas bake sales every Tuesday and Thursday.

December 1-20

Annual BLM food, clothing and toy drive.

December 14

BLM Christmas party to be held at the Elks Club.

December 18

BLM Annual Charity Raffle in ASO's Denali Room at 2:30 p.m. All proceeds go to charity.

A pplause

Sustained Superior Performance Award =====

Sue Faught, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Mineral Resources
Arlene Rocker, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management
Michael Hogan, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management
Glen Nelson, Offset Press Operator Foreman, ASO Division of Support Services
Sue Michael, Administrative Specialist, ASO Division of Support Services
Lisa Burgess, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management
Carolyn Mitchell, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management

Special Act Award =====

Margaret McDaniel, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management
Loretta Fitzsimmons, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management

Quality Step Increase Award =====

Betty Roseberry, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Mineral Resources

Georgia Taylor, Secretary, ASO Division of Support Services

Rick Gregg, Accounting Technician, ASO Division of Support Services

On-The-Spot Cash Award =====

Helen Cameron, Miscellaneous Documents Examiner, ASO Division of Support Services
Kelly Mahoney, Personnel Actions Clerk, Typist, ASO Division of Support Services

Length of Service =====

10 Year Pin

Ralph Basner, Land Law Examiner, ASO Division of Conveyance Management
David Dash, Supervisory Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service

20 Year Pin

Allen Cronk, Supervisory Realty Specialist, Steese/White Mountains District
Gary McMurtrey, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service

Welcome Aboard (September 1990)

Paul R. Evans, Cartographic Aid, ASO Division of Cadastral Survey
Lucy A. Zybur, Contact Representative, ASO Division of Cadastral Survey
Bernice G. Sterin, Physical Scientist, ASO Division of Lands and Renewable Resources
Jon Larson, Lead Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service
Richard Barden, Cartographic Technician, ASO Division of Support Services
Brian Lubinski, Fishery Biologist, Steese/White Mountains District

Moving On (September 1990)

Darlene Thomas, Accounting Technician, Fairbanks Support Center

Retirements:

Harold E. Wolverton, Special Projects Officer, ASO Division of Information Resources Management
Carl E. Neufelder, Navigable Waters Specialist, ASO Division of Conveyances Management
Horace D. Sanders, Supervisory Program Analyst, ASO Division of Cadastral Survey

AFS Hosts Soviet Aviators

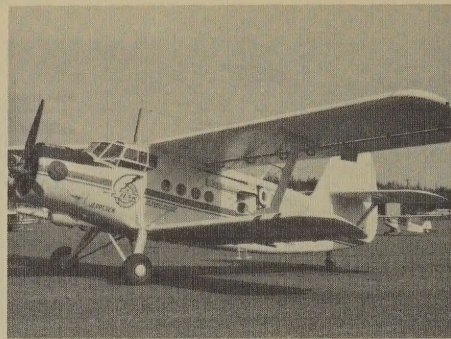
by Sue Mitchell

BLM's Alaska Fire Service hosted 23 Soviet aviators the night of August 31. The Soviets stopped in Galena with their seven planes when weather prevented them from reaching Nome on their return trip to the Soviet Union.

The AFS zone headquarters in Galena provided meals, lodging and a warm welcome for the Soviets. They traded trinkets and stories. Then the Soviets left the next morning after breakfast for Nome and Siberia.

The Soviet Union's Association Flight Safety Foundation made the trip as a fact-finding and good will expedition 7,000 miles from Moscow to Fairbanks. Three planes flew on to Seattle and the airmen visited with representatives of the American Owners and Pilots Association to discuss establishing private aviation in the Soviet Union.

The rest remained in Fairbanks, and took a short jaunt to Anchorage. The crews were in Alaska for two weeks, but the trip from Moscow to Fairbanks took a month.



Anatonov-2 biplane. (photo by Gil Eggleston)

The aviators hope to promote private aviation in the USSR. Currently there are no privately owned aircraft and no private pilot licenses in the Soviet Union. Six of the seven planes were Yakovlev 18Ts, the seventh was a large biplane called an Anatonov-2. They were all made in the Soviet Union.

The Air Force Base at Galena is responsible for early interception of Soviet "bear" bombers. The base commander requested the names of the Soviet airmen, who were not allowed to come on base. This was probably the first time since World War II that Soviet aircraft have landed at Galena.

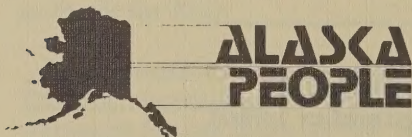
ALASKA PEOPLE is published monthly for the employees of the Bureau of Land Management and is distributed statewide. It is produced by the Public Affairs Staff, Alaska State Office, 222 W. 7th Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska, 99513-7599. Phone 271-5555.

Chief - David Vickery
Editor/Writer/Design
Tricia Hogervorst-Rukke
Layout - Jim Mroczek



On the Cover:

Sue Steinacher, Interpretive Specialist for BLM's Steese/White Mountains District, starts off on the two week goodwill tour of the Chukotka Region, USSR.
(photo by Valodia Sertoon)



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